

# Spiritan Horizons

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Volume 6 | Issue 6

Article 10

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Fall 2011

## Freedom (Poem)

Desmond Egan

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### Recommended Citation

Egan, D. (2011). Freedom (Poem). *Spiritan Horizons*, 6 (6). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/spiritan-horizons/vol6/iss6/10>

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## Desmond Egan

By his own admission, Irish poet Desmond Egan is well known and feared. A full-time writer, he has written 23 collections of poetry, and has published two translations of Greek plays. He is also Artistic Director of the Gerard Manley Hopkins International Festival, which takes place annually in Newbridge College, Ireland, and is now 24 years in existence.

Egan is married with two daughters, and lives near Newbridge, 25 miles from Dublin. He has been a visiting writer at Duquesne for 12 years. He has received a number of awards, and an Honorary Doctorate from Washburn University.

## FREEDOM

*All that is serious in life comes from our freedom.*

—Henri Bergson

secondary smoke  
sifts into everyone's lungs  
the flutter of a butterfly here  
can cause a landslide there

and as long as there is any captive  
shuffling around in shackles and violent orange  
I mean right this very minute  
*though unseen by you and me*  
*can any of us be*  
*fully free*

as long as someone is screaming  
as hate's electrodes are firmly applied  
listen and smell I mean right now  
*though unseen by you and me*  
*can any of us be*  
*fully free*

as long as someone is guilty  
for being black or poor or different or young  
or all of these together  
*though unseen by you and me*  
*can any of us be*  
*fully free*

as long as rubber bullets  
and canisters of gas have wings  
as long as otherness is filtered  
through a bloodshot eye  
as long as one human soul cannot  
rise into its own singing  
*though unseen by you and me*  
*can any of us be*  
*fully free*

as long as the unhoping lie  
starving of what they should have been  
*though unseen by you and me*  
*can any of us be*  
*fully free*

